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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FULLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE
REPORT CLASS [REDACTED]

DIST: 11 JULY 1986

COUNTRY: USSR

SUBJ: MVD ESCORT AND PATROL GUARD COMPANY V/CH 7461

DOI: 1972 - 1974

REF: [REDACTED]

SOURCE: [REDACTED]

SUMMARY: THE MVD ESCORT AND PATROL GUARD COMPANY V/CH 7461 WAS
LOCATED IN VOLGOGRAD AND WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ESCORTING DEFENDANTS

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FROM JAILS TO COURTS IN THE CITY AND ESCORTING CONVICTED PRISONERS TO CORRECTIVE LABOR CAMPS THROUGHOUT THE USSR. SOME OF THE PRISONERS APPEARED TO BE POLITICAL PRISONERS ALTHOUGH THEY HAD BEEN CONVICTED UNDER CRIMINAL CODE ARTICLES.

TEXT: 1. THE ESCORT GUARD COMPANY V/CH 7461 WAS ONE OF THREE MVD GUARD COMPANIES STATIONED IN OR NEAR VOLGOGRAD. THE THREE COMPANIES TAKEN TOGETHER DID NOT FORM A SINGLE ENTITY SUCH AS A BATTALION, BUT WERE INDEPENDENT UNITS, EACH WITH A SEPARATE MISSION. TWO OF THE COMPANIES, INCLUDING V/CH 7461, WERE STATIONED IN VOLGOGRAD, RSFSR, AND THE THIRD COMPANY, V/CH 7461-B, WAS STATIONED AT A CORRECTIVE LABOR CAMP IN THE NEARBY TOWN OF VOLZHSKIY, ABOUT 25 MILES NORTHEAST OF VOLGOGRAD. THE SECOND COMPANY STATIONED IN VOLGOGRAD PROVIDED HONOR GUARD SERVICE AT THE MAMAYEV KURGAN WAR MEMORIAL IN VOLGOGRAD, WHICH COMMEMORATED A MAJOR SOVIET TANK VICTORY OVER NAZI INVADERS IN 1942.

2. THE TWO COMPANIES IN VOLGOGRAD, EACH OF ABOUT 120 MEN, WERE HOUSED IN A SMALL, FENCED MILITARY COMPLEX OF FOUR ONE- AND TWO-STORY BARRACKS NEAR THE CENTER OF TOWN. THE COMMANDING OFFICER (NAME NOT RECALLED), A COLONEL, HAD A MAJOR AS HIS DEPUTY AND THERE WAS A CAPTAIN IN CHARGE OF POLITICAL MATTERS. EACH COMPANY WAS HEADED BY A CAPTAIN, AND EACH CONSISTED OF FOUR PLATOONS WITH ABOUT 25 OR 30 MEN IN A PLATOON, COMMANDED BY A LIEUTENANT. THE MISSION OF THE FIRST COMPANY, V/CH 7461, WAS TWO-FOLD: TO ESCORT (BAILIFFS) DEFENDANTS BETWEEN DETENTION CENTERS (SIZO, SLEDSTVENNIY IZOLYATOR) AND COURTS WITHIN THE CITY, INCLUDING GUARDING DEFENDANTS DURING TRIALS; AND TO ESCORT CONVICTED INDIVIDUALS FROM DETENTION CENTERS AND CORRECTIVE INSTITUTIONS TO AREAS OF LONG-TERM INCARCERATION, PRIMARILY CORRECTIVE LABOR CAMPS, LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE USSR. ESCORT PLATOONS (EACH OF THE FOUR PLATOONS OF THE COMPANY HAD IDENTICAL FUNCTIONS) PICKED UP PRISONERS FOR ESCORTING NOT ONLY FROM THE VOLGOGRAD AREA, WHERE THERE WERE ABOUT FOUR OR FIVE CORRECTIVE LABOR CAMPS, BUT WERE SENT TO CITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY FOR THAT PURPOSE. THEY DID NOT DELIVER PRISONERS TO THE ACTUAL CAMP OR DETENTION FACILITY TO WHICH THE PRISONER WOULD BE ASSIGNED, BUT DELIVERED THEM TO THE RAILROAD STATION CLOSEST TO THE END FACILITY, WHERE THEY WERE MET BY LOCAL ESCORT GUARD COMPANY MEMBERS WHO TOOK CHARGE OF THE PRISONERS AND DELIVERED THEM, USUALLY BY TRUCK, TO THEIR FINAL DESTINATION. THE ESCORTING PLATOON RARELY RETURNED TO ITS HOME BASE WITHOUT GETTING ANOTHER ESCORT ASSIGNMENT FROM SOME LOCATION ALONG ITS RETURN ROUTE.

3. CITIES FROM WHICH PRISONERS WERE OFTEN PICKED UP TO TRANSFER TO LABOR CAMPS INCLUDED MOSCOW, LENINGRAD, ULAN-UDE, LVOV, VOLGOGRAD, AND CHERKASSY. GUARDS WERE INTENTIONALLY NEVER SENT TO PERFORM ESCORTING DUTIES IN THEIR HOME TOWNS. LOCATIONS WHERE PRISONERS, MOSTLY MALE BUT OCCASIONALLY INCLUDING FEMALES, WERE TURNED OVER TO LOCAL ESCORT PERSONNEL INCLUDED TYUMEN (WHERE THERE WERE SAID TO BE ABOUT FIVE CORRECTIVE LABOR CAMPS), ASTRAKHAN (THE KALMYTSKAYA ASSR, AND THE MORDOVSKAYA ASSR, WHERE THERE WERE SAID TO BE MANY LABOR CAMPS OF VARIOUS TYPES).

4. WHENEVER A PLATOON RECEIVED A PRISONER ESCORT ASSIGNMENT,

THE PLATOON LEADER OR HIS DEPUTY WOULD GO TO THE RAILROAD STATION TO SELECT AND INSPECT A PRISONER TRANSPORT CAR FOR THE JOURNEY. THE CAR WOULD BE INCLUDED IN A CIVILIAN PASSENGER TRAIN AND WOULD INVARIABLY BE EITHER THE FIRST OR THE LAST CAR. ON THE STATION PLATFORM SIDE THE CAR HAD WINDOWS LIKE AN ORDINARY CIVILIAN PASSENGER CAR, EXCEPT THAT THE CURTAINS WOULD ALWAYS BE DRAWN. THERE WERE NO WINDOWS ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE CAR. ALONG THE WINDOWS THERE WAS A PASSAGE-WAY USED BY THE ESCORTS FOR PATROLLING AND ALONG THE PASSAGE-WAY THERE WERE FIVE CELLS WHICH COULD ACCOMMODATE UP TO 12 PRISONERS EACH PLUS TWO GUARD ROOMS, ONE FOR THE SOLDIERS AND ONE FOR THE PLATOON LEADER AND/OR HIS DEPUTY. PRISONER CONVOYS USUALLY CONSISTED OF ABOUT 60 INDIVIDUALS. ONLY ABOUT 10 MEMBERS OF THE ESCORT PLATOON PARTICIPATED IN ANY ONE ESCORT MISSION, THE PLATOON MEMBERS REMAINING BEHIND IN VOLGOGRAD CONTINUED WITH THEIR BAILIFF DUTIES. COLD RATIONS FOR THE PRISONERS TO COVER THE LENGTH OF THE JOURNEY WERE PREPARED IN ADVANCE BY THE INSTITUTION FROM WHICH THE PRISONERS WERE BEING TAKEN. ESCORT GUARDS BROUGHT ALONG THEIR OWN FOOD SUPPLIES FROM HOME OR FROM THE COMPANY MESS, BUT THEY WERE ALSO ALLOWED TO DINE AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE IN THE TRAIN'S DINING CAR. PRISONERS RECEIVED NO WARM FOOD OR DRINK, EXCEPT WHEN A MEMBER OF THE ESCORT GUARDS AGREED, USING A PRISONER'S OWN MONEY, TO BUY HIM SOMETHING FROM THE TRAIN'S DINER.

5. A DOSSIER IN THE SAFEKEEPING OF THE PLATOON LEADER OR HIS DEPUTY ACCOMPANIED EACH PRISONER BEING ESCORTED. (REDACTED) COMMENT: OCCASIONAL PERUSAL OF DOSSIERS REVEALED THAT SOME PRISONERS WHO HAD BEEN CONVICTED AS CRIMINALS WERE IN FACT POLITICAL PRISONERS CONVICTED UNDER CRIMINAL CODE ARTICLES SUCH AS ANTI-SOVIET AGITATION, VIOLATION OF LAWS ON SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE, PARTICIPATION IN ANTI-SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS, ETC. POLITICAL PRISONERS COULD ALSO BE DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR INTELLIGENT APPEARANCE AND BEHAVIOR AS OPPOSED TO THE ROUGH APPEARANCE AND ATTITUDES OF THE CRIMINALS THAT MADE UP THE BULK OF THE TRANSPORTEES. MANY OF THOSE WHO APPEARED TO BE POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE TRANSPORTED TO STATIONS IN MORDOVSKAYA ASSR AND PENZENSKAYA OBLAST AND THERE WERE ONE OR TWO INSTANCES WHEN PRISONERS WERE TRANSPORTED TO A SPETSPSIKHBOL'NITSA (SPECIAL PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL) IN THE ASTRAKHAN' AREA. MOST CORRECTIVE LABOR CAMPS WERE IN THE RSFSR, WITH POSSIBLY A FEW IN THE UKSSR. THERE WERE ALSO DETENTION CENTERS (SIZO) AND LABOR CAMPS OPERATED BY THE KGB.)

6. CORRECTIVE LABOR COLONIES, ALSO CALLED CORRECTIVE LABOR CAMPS, WERE OF FOUR TYPES FOR MALE INMATES: GENERAL SECURITY, INCREASED SECURITY, STRICT SECURITY, AND EXTRA OR SPECIAL SECURITY (OBSHCHEGO, USILENNOGO, STROGOGO, OSOBOGO REZHIMA). FOR FEMALE INMATES ONLY THE TWO TYPES EXISTED: GENERAL SECURITY AND STRICT SECURITY. THE VARIOUS SECURITY LEVELS WERE DIFFERENTIATED BY TYPE OF ACCOMMODATIONS, NUMBER OF PRISONERS IN A ROOM OR CELL, NUMBER OF GUARD PERSONNEL, RATIONS RECEIVED, AND PRIVILEGES ALLOWED SUCH AS NUMBER OF VISITORS PERMITTED MONTHLY OR ANNUALLY AND NUMBER OF PACKAGES THAT COULD BE RECEIVED IN A GIVEN PERIOD AND NUMBER OF LETTERS THAT COULD BE SENT OR RECEIVED. ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE FEMALE CAMPS AND IN THE FIRST THREE TYPES OF MALE CAMPS WERE USUALLY IN

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DORMITORY-TYPE BARRACKS WITH FROM ABOUT 6 TO 40 PRISONERS IN A ROOM. IN EXTRA SECURITY CAMPS, ACCOMMODATIONS WERE IN CELLS WITH NO MORE THAN TWO OR THREE MEN IN A CELL. ALL OF THE TYPES HAD INTERNAL BRIGS AND ISOLATION CELLS (SHTRAFNOY IZOLYATOR) WHERE VIOLENT OR RECALCITRANT PRISONERS WERE KEPT. PRISONERS HAD WORK DUTIES IN ALL THE TYPES OF CAMPS AND THE CAMPS WHERE PRISONERS WERE FORCED TO LABOR IN PARTICULARLY UNPLEASANT CONDITIONS (MINES AND COLD CLIMATE) WERE EITHER STRICT OR EXTRA SECURITY TYPES. IN ADDITION TO THE FOUR TYPES OF LABOR CAMPS, THERE WERE TWO TYPES OF PRISONS, USED MOSTLY FOR VERY DIFFICULT PRISONERS OR THOSE WITH VERY LONG SENTENCES, THE TYPES BEING GENERAL SECURITY AND STRICT SECURITY. IN EACH OF THESE TYPES OF PRISONS, PRISONERS WERE HELD IN LOCKED CELLS AND OTHER CONDITIONS AND PRIVILEGES WERE AT LEAST AS SEVERE AS IN EXTRA SECURITY-TYPE CAMPS.

7. MOST OF THE NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER PERSONNEL OF THE TWO MVD ESCORT GUARD COMPANIES IN VOLGOGRAD AND THE PATROL GUARD COMPANY IN VOLZHSKIY WERE TWO-YEAR DRAFTEES WHO HAD RECEIVED THEIR BASIC AND SPECIALIZED TRAINING IN A SIX-MONTH COURSE AT THE MVD SERGEANTS SCHOOL IN KALACH, LOCATED IN A SMALL GARRISON WHERE THERE WAS ALSO A SCHOOL FOR WARRANT OFFICERS (PRAPORSHCHIKIY). THE WARRANT OFFICERS WERE EXTENDED DUTY PERSONNEL WHO WERE BEING TRAINED FOR INTERNAL GUARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES WITHIN CORRECTIVE LABOR CAMPS AND OTHER MVD DETENTION INSTALLATIONS SUCH AS SPECIAL PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS. WARRANT OFFICERS DID NOT COME UNDER THE COMMAND OF ESCORT PERSONNEL, BUT WERE UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF INSTALLATION COMMANDERS. ESCORT COMPANY PLATOON LEADERS WERE MOSTLY RESERVISTS, PERFORMING TWO-YEAR OR SHORTER COMPULSORY TOURS OF DUTY, FOLLOWING WHICH THEY WOULD RETAIN A STATUS IN THE MVD RESERVE. STUDENTS AT THE SERGEANTS SCHOOL, IN ADDITION TO BASIC TRAINING, WHICH WAS THE SAME AS FOR MOTORIZED RIFLE INFANTRYMEN, EXCEPT FOR A PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON SNIPER TRAINING, RECEIVED SPECIALIZED TRAINING IN ESCORT AND PATROL GUARD DUTIES, INCLUDING THE HANDLING OF GUARD DOGS. THERE WAS VERY LITTLE INDOCTRINATION ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE MVD. ENLISTED MEN OF THE ESCORT AND PATROL GUARD COMPANIES WERE TRAINED ON THE JOB IN THEIR UNITS.

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